July 12, 2011

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioners:

Waycross, Georgia, is in a mostly rural area in the southeast part of the state. With a population of nearly 15,000, we serve as a medical and retail center for the surrounding eight counties. Our Chamber serves the entire Ware County area and seeks to improve the quality of life here.

Two fairly recent developments that have made a big difference in communities like Waycross are the proliferation of cellular telephones and the advent of the Internet. Over the past couple of decades, these two things have connected us with the rest of the state, the nation and the world in ways that a generation or two earlier couldn't have imagined.

Now, these technologies have come together, and we are using cellular signals for everything from laptop computers and netbooks to navigation systems in cars and e-readers. Of course, not everyone in our more remote areas has adequate cellular service, and even where there is coverage, growing demand can put strains on the system.

We ask you today to approve the AT&T/T-Mobile merger, which could increase cellular coverage across more areas of the country and provider users with faster service when we use these tools to connect to the Internet. As a result of the merger, AT&T has plans to reach more than 97 percent of the people in America with its advanced wireless coverage, and we are looking forward to that day and the benefits it can bring our community.

Our local businesses can use this new service to help them reach more customers. Our medical facilities will find it easier to consult with specialists in large city hospitals. Students can study more flexibly through online classes without having to leave the area.

This merger will help areas like Ware County. Please help bring these services to the thousands of smaller communities like ours across the country.

Sincerely,

Jan Harris Sanchez
Executive Director
Waycross-Ware County Chamber of Commerce